

## **Leroy Carroll**

Tape #21-22

Interviewed by Mike W. Brown, 10 August 1976

Interview with Mr. Leroy Carroll, 10 August 1976, by Mike W. Brown, Golden Age Center.

Leroy Carroll (Leroy): My father was on a mission to Ireland in 1893, the year I was born. I have some of the work he gathered and information he got. I wrote it up. James O'Carroll was my great, great-grandfather. His father, Lord O'Carroll, was given the lordship because he was a supporter of the King of England. The King gave him a grant of land for his participation in gathering taxes for the King of England. When he organized his sons and grandsons into a militia, they were supporting the King.

We don't know what that Lord O'Carroll's name was. That's all we know, just Lord O'Carroll. But his youngest son, out of eight or nine boys, married a girl. The English sent over men and troops to gather taxes in Ireland. My grandfather helped them, so he was given this lordship. The troops that were over there would have big parties, have good times. The girls, the colleens, of the people in the country, came and entertained these troops. One of the girls was named Margaret Pollow. She was the daughter of a commoner. James O'Carroll was also in love with this girl. This nobleman, this lord, got around here and took her out a lot of times. In fact he got her in trouble. When he was ordered back to England, this girl was with child and he couldn't take her with him. So, he hired James O'Carroll to marry her. When Lord O'Carroll heard that James had married a commoner, he disowned him. Because of his standing and position, he had him banished to New Brunswick. He took his wife with him.

On the way to New Brunswick he talked with the captain of the ship. This captain was going to New Brunswick to get means to buy more ships. He was in import/export; he was in a company. The Englishman had paid him 50,000 pounds to marry the girl. He invested the money the Englishman had given him in the ship company's import business. When they got to New Brunswick, he was pretty well set up. He and his new bride were given a nice home. He became a member of the board of directors of the import/export outfit. With these ships they had bought, they were going to Germany, Italy and different places to get their produce to bring to New Brunswick. While getting it, they bought a lot of illicit whiskey, booze and stuff. When the authorities in New Brunswick got a hold of it, they had him thrown in the pen and confiscated his booze.

During this time Margaret Pollow had given birth to a child. He wasn't a very strong baby and he died. They named him Terrance O'Carroll. After he died, his mother had another baby by James O'Carroll. They named him Patrick, Patrick O'Carroll. In the meantime the officials got a hold of him and banished him from New Brunswick. That's the last we ever knew of him. That's the end of him. But Patrick, his son, grew up and married a girl named Negas. His mother married a man just after Patrick was born. He was a good sized kid. The other fellow died, whom she had married, and left her a widow again with this Patrick O'Carroll. Well, he grew up and married this Negas girl. They had a baby and named it Patrick. That was my grandfather. My grandfather moved from New Brunswick to Heber City. My grandfather came from Heber out here to Vernal. That's the way we got here.

Mike Brown (MB): Did your grandfather come across the plains with the Mormon companies?

Leroy: No, they came this other way from New Brunswick. There, the missionaries had contacted them and they came direct from New Brunswick to Utah. My Great-grandmother Wamsley was born in Ireland. She came to the United States and married my grandfather. My Grandmother Wamsley was the first woman baptized in England into the L.D.S. Church. She came to Utah with the Saints when they were expelled. Then she met my grandfather near Salt Lake. First they went up into Idaho and then into Arizona. Then they came back to Utah just the same time my Grandfather Carroll came from Heber City. That was in 1886.

My father and John Glines had the first mail contract from Green River to Whiterocks. After he had this contract a few years, these Wamsley girls came up from Arizona. In 1888 they got married here in Vernal. My mother and her sister married my father and his brother, Iva Gray's mother and father.

MB: I was talking to Iva last week and she told me you were cousins.

Leroy: Yeah, we are double cousins. So that's the history.

MB: Did you know your grandfather?

Leroy: No. I never knew my Grandfather Carroll. He died the year I was born, in 1893. But I knew my Grandfather Wamsley.

MB: Did your Grandfather Wamsley live here?

Leroy: Yes. That is, he had a homestead over here on the creek. My Grandfather Carroll brought the first sawmill in 1878. They moved the sawmill in from Heber City. My father, his older brother, and my grandfather set it up here at Rock Point. Do you know where the head of the feeder canal for the reservoir is?

MB: You mean Steinaker?

Leroy: Yes, Steinaker. Right at the head of the canal is where my grandfather's sawmill was. My Grandfather Wamsley had a filing right below there on the same section years afterwards. The intake for Steinaker Reservoir is the place where Fort Thornburg was. That was on my grandfather's filing. So when they moved the Fort there, they bought Grandfather out, and he had to move his mill up on Taylor Mountain. That's the reason they took the mill up there. They didn't confiscate the land, but he had to relinquish.

MB: The government has a way of doing that.

Leroy: Yes. The government took that away from him. That was a beautiful meadow in there. When the officers of the Army came there and saw it was good place for horses and mules, they said, "You've got to move out." So they moved Grandfather out. In years after that, my

Grandfather Wamsley had squatter's rights in the same place. Just down below from there on the road. They lived there for years and years. He died when he was 89 years old. My Grandfather Carroll was only 75 when he died. He died of dropsy, is what they called it then.

MB: Did you ever work at the mill when you were a boy?

Leroy: Oh, no. They had that mill before I was born. See that picture of that house? That house was built right about here, just a little east of this house. My father filed on this piece of property that I'm on now in 1884. When they moved the sawmill up there, Grandfather had to build another house. So he built this house right here on my father's filing. He had 160 acres right through here. I've still got the deed, signed by the President of the United States in 1896 after he proved up on the place. He filed on it in 1884. When he built this house and Father came back off his mission and Grandfather was dead, he moved his family into this house. Here's where all my brothers and sisters were born, except my baby brother who was born in Brisby, Arizona. That is the origin of my family.

I went on a mission to Hawaii. See those pictures up there? That is the Hawaiian Temple. That temple was built and dedicated in 1919. That's when I went down there on my mission. See in the one picture of the high, big palm trees? That was taken this year. I helped plant those palm trees that are around the temple.

MB: What do you remember about your father?

Leroy: Very little. My father died when I was only eleven years old. I remember several things he told me. One thing I remember that comes to me very closely is, at the time when Nixon was evicted from the Presidency of the United States, it reminded me of what my father told me when I was six years old. I came home from school one day and told my father, "Oh, those boys are just raising Ned down there in school." And he told me, "Son, remember this, when Tray is in bad company, he's a bad dog too. So, stay out of that." So, that's what I think about Nixon. Nixon got in with a bunch of bad dogs, so he was a bad dog, too.

MB: That's good advice.

Leroy: That's good advice. Another thing my father told me, I was about seven years old and I helped drive a bunch of cattle from here. We all put our cattle together and drove them up into Dry Fork to summer them. I had a very good saddle pony. My uncle gave her to me. The cow punchers broke her and she was a wonderful saddle horse. I was helping drive those cattle up there. Father told me, he says, "Now Son, you've got a good horse. Do your part, but don't be a showoff. Don't act smart. Men don't like kids that act smart." That's another piece of advice I remember from my father. That's about all I can remember. That was only when I was six, seven, eight years old.

MB: What do you remember from your boyhood? What did you do when you were a boy? What was a typical day?

Leroy: Well, my father was sick. He had to come home off his mission from Ireland because he had a heart attack. His heart was in very bad condition, so they sent him home. He had what they

call, the valves of his heart wouldn't close. He was sick all the time. I never can remember when my father was well. So when he went away to work, my mother and I had to raise the garden and take care of the place here. When I was six years old, I used to ride the cultivator horse and my mother held the cultivator while we cultivated our garden. I've worked like that all my life.

[The following section was played from a tape Mr. Carroll self-recorded.]

Now, my father died in 1904. I was eleven years old. We had rented the farm for several years to the neighbors and I said to mother, "We are only getting half a crop from our farm and I'm sure that Vet, Orville, and I can raise a half a crop." So we took over the farm in 1907. I got up at daylight in the morning, harnessed the horses, and worked until 8:30 and then I'd come in, wash. My pony was ready and I'd ride to school. As soon as school was out, I'd come back home, get on the machinery and work until dark. This is the way I put in the crop, with Vet's help. We raised a crop that way for three years. We raised a pretty good crop, much more than we would have gotten out of it, had we rented it. We had the sale of the field in the fall. We could sell the crop, the seed that was in the field. So we did that for three years.

I told mother in 1910, "If you let me stay out of school, I'm not doing a good job in school nor a good job on the farm, if you let me stay out for one year, I'll go to work to Dragon and haul ore. Then I'll have money to go to school on." She agreed. So Ray McKee and I took our teams and went to Dragon.

We had a camp on White River, a tent and a stove, a camp there. We'd go out from White River to Bonanza and load our wagons. I was 17 years old and weighed 125 lbs. Those sacks of ore weighed from 250 to 300 lbs. It was quite a chore for me to get the load on. But once we loaded, we would drive back to White River. The next morning we would drive into Dragon, unload our load. We had a wagon box of bows and cover to sleep in. We boarded at the boarding house. Next morning we'd drive back to White River and camp. That way we made a trip every three days. We worked like that all winter.

In the fall of 1911, Moroni Gerber was taking a load of students to BYU and I got a ride out to Pleasant Grove with him. It cost me a dollar a day for my passage and board, and I furnished my own bed. We were six days on the road. When we left Pleasant Grove, I went into Salt Lake and there met Clo and Roy Bentley and stayed all night with Roy. Next morning I went on up to Logan and got a place to board with Mother Pete on 5<sup>th</sup> North, three or four blocks from the college. I went up to the college, registered, and got a job in the janitorial department. I got 15 cents an hour. I swept the gymnasium floor. I really swept acres of floor during that first year. I went up to Smithfield where my mother's people lived for Christmas. I didn't get home then until spring. In June, when school was out, I went to Mack, Colorado, on the train, up over Baxter Pass and home to Vernal on the old stage. I worked on the farm. The crop was all that summer.

In the fall of 1912, Mother decided to take all four of her boys and go to Logan to school. Shirley Daniels went with us. We loaded our wagon up with our beds, cooking utensils and what we needed for housekeeping. Johnny Wise put his team on ahead of my team and we drove to the top of Taylor Mountain. Here he left us and came back home. We went on over Taylor Mountain to Lone Tree to Mountain View and there we stayed all night. On the road over there to Mountain View, we ran onto a ewe and a lamb that had strayed from the herd. As all the other sheep were moved off the mountain, we knew the coyotes would kill them. Shirley had his

shotgun and killed the lamb. So we had nice meat from there all the way to Logan. When we got to Bear Lake, Shirley and Orville, with his .22, killed quite a few ducks and we had change of feed. From there we went up over the mountain and down Logan Canyon to Logan. We didn't stop there. We went right on up to Smithfield where mother's people were. We stayed there a couple of days and then came back to Logan where Mother rented a house that she could take in boarders and roomers. We settled in for the winter.

I and Vet registered for school. Vet got a job in the dairy. He was very interested in creamery, making butter, cheese and that. He got a job in the dairy and creamery and I got some work after school. Orville and Free had to go to public school. R. S. Collett's boy and girl came to Logan and they lived with us. We took the team up to Smithfield to winter them.

After school was out in the spring, I went to Mule Creek and plowed fields all summer. I plowed on a big farm. I'd make three rounds in the forenoon and three in the afternoon. I had eight horses on a four-bottom plow breaking sod. After I'd break a week or more plowing, I'd disc it. I worked there all summer. Orville came out and stayed with me a week and shot jack rabbits out in the flat. He got five cents bounty on the jack rabbit's ears. The rabbits were eating the crops and the county paid a bounty.

When I'd go out in the mornings to plow, the seagulls were just thick everywhere, sitting on my plow and waiting for me to start up. They would scream, carry on and fly, pick up all the worms, bugs, rats and mice I plowed them out of the field. We had about fifty head of horses on the ranch so I had plenty of changes of horses. I'd work eight one day, then I'd change the next. I worked there all summer. In 1913 Walter John Glenn was coming out to Vernal as County Farm Agent. He drove his team along with Mother and Clo.

In 1914, Vet came home and got the team and drove it back to Logan. We all came home in 1914. That fall I went back to school alone. I got back to Mother Pete's boarding house the same as I had the first year.

In February of 1915, my brothers, Orville, Vet and Free put the horse on the buggy and went up in the flats to kill jackrabbits. When they came back, they stopped at the graveyard. They opened the gate to go down through the graveyard hunting rabbits. Free got out [of the buggy] and knocked the lines out of Vet's hands. When he stooped over to pick up the lines, Orville's gun discharged and shot him right through the heart. Vet grabbed the lines and hollered at the old mare and she ran down to old Uncle Joe Carroll's place. When he got there, Orville was plumb dead. They immediately wired Clo and I. Clo was in Salt Lake nursing. We came home in February 1915 and I never went back to school. I was a junior at the time and I regretted it all my life.

One block west of the Maeser store an Angel Street, or the Lapoint road, leading north two blocks, was a lane leading to the Maeser tithing office. On this lot was a brick office building, a large lumber [yard], granary, a large potato pit and a yard to stack hay. Every farmer had a dairy herd, a pig pen, and a flock of chickens. We all raised potatoes, apples and other garden stuff. One tenth of each crop was tithed and brought to the tithing office. The eggs, butter, apples and potatoes often greatly exceeded the demand of the poor in the ward causing a big surplus. This perishable produce was often wasted. One year I remember the bishop sold potatoes to the farmers for livestock feed for ten cents a bushel. Because of the waste, the presiding bishop advised that the farmers market their own produce and pay the amount in cash. The hay and grain could be carried over without such great loss and every tenth load of hay was brought to the tithing office.

One Saturday after bringing a number of loads of hay, Orin Collett and I used a horse for pulling hay off the wagons to take our girls to the dance in Naples. Between loads of hay, the horse ate off the stack so he knew where to get his dinner. That Saturday night dance always lasted until 12 midnight, never later, so we didn't dance on Sunday. After taking the girls home, we drove as fast as possible until we got through Vernal. Then we buckled the lines together, dropped them over the dashboard and let the horse take his own time going home. We covered up with a lap robe and went to sleep. When the horse came to the land leading to the tithing office, he knew where to go, for the shortest way for his dinner was to the tithing office. So he went to the haystack.

The land was used by all the people walking to church because it was just one block east of the tithing office, where Kid Collier's home is now. As the kids came by, they saw our buggy by the haystack, and came yelling and woke us up. We were already dressed in our best clothes so we backed up our horse, drove him down, and were early for Sunday school.

That summer, B.H. Colton, an engineer and our bishop, called in the ward members concerned. We pledged cash and work to build the pipeline. The intake was the settling tank in William Ashby's pasture near the road on the canal. It ran east to Wilbur Oaks' home and north to the schoolhouse. The trench for the pipe was dug with pick and shovel. First paid by the day and then at last by contract by the foot, we received credit on our family assessment. The cost of the pipe had to be paid in cash. Arch Allen, Chris Johnson, William McConkie, and I hauled the first load of pipe.

While in Price, I called Ottella Markum in Spanish Fork; she was at Brother Steven's home. The Spanish Fork meat factory was being built and the laborers were boarding at his house and Ottella was helping feeding them. The phone was in the living room and all the fellows heard the conversation. Ottella was very flustered and the fellows enjoyed it. When I got home, there was a letter explaining why the conversation was so strange.

In the fall, Vet went to Price and stayed a short time with Aunt Maude. Then he went to Silver City and worked in the coal mines. He also got a job for a short time as fireman on the railroad. Then he went to Arizona to my Uncle Free Hubbard's home. When he got back, the World War [One] was on and the U. S. had passed the draft law. All males eighteen and over were subject to the draft. I reported to the draft board and was informed that the slogan, "Who Will Win the War," was signed.

Every good farm would have a farmer designated to it, so one of the two boys would be exempt. Vet came home in a few days and I said to him, "Now you have had a good vacation, so I feel you should stay here on the farm and let me answer the draft." He said, "I would rather go straight to France then stay on this farm." Next morning he went down to the draft board and volunteered in the Marine Corps, so I was stuck to stay on the farm. When he came home, he told mother he was to leave immediately. She took him down to Patriarch Nelson Merkley and had his patriarchal blessing. He was promised he would live a good life and if he was regular with his prayers, he would return home unharmed.

When he got to France, he was assigned to the motorcycle dispatch division. He was given a motorcycle with a side car. He was to take dispatches from headquarters to the front lines. He had a map and instructions how to get there by the fastest route to the lines. He was riding motor as far as he could and then [would] sneak up to the trenches. Three times when he returned to his motorcycle, he found it was blown all to bits, and he had to get back the best way he could. One night when he was crawling back, the search lights spotted him. He had to throw

himself down and lay there while the shells burst over his head. He said his blessing and prayed very fervently. There was a ? about the size of his head and he tried to crawl under it. Finally the lights went out and he fled as fast as he could run. The average life of a dispatcher was five days. When he got home, he told mother a number of times that he was sure that the Lord was watching over him.

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, the stake had a celebration: a parade, a program and the order of the day, after which we had refreshments. It was held in the old bowery, by the brush shed, located on the block where the post office is now. My partner that day was Clara Merkley, Hedge Merkley's aunt. Ottella Markum was vacationing with her cousin Erella McKee, daughter of William McKee. He lived where Harold McKee lives now. George Islip lived where Harvey McKee lives and his son, John, had Ottella for his partner. The young people had their refreshments together. We enjoyed our afternoon very much. In the evening we all went to the dance in the new Orpheus. It was the general practice for all the dancers to have their own program. After the dance began the boys would fill up their program. I had several dances with Ottella and I enjoyed them very much. We attended many ward services during the summer and a peculiar thing turned out. John married Clara Merkley and I married Ottella Markum.

In the fall I contracted my lambs to the buyer Pat Whalon. He bought most of the lambs in the county. They were all to be delivered to Dragon. I put my little bunch in with Bodily's at Green River and went with Irvin, Joe's oldest boy, and the herders to drive to Dragon. When we got about ten miles from Dragon, we were told about the terrible flu epidemic. Herders were found dead in bed. So many railroad men were sick and dead that the trains were not running. The sheep buyers had organized and agreed to pay ten cents a head to have the lambs delivered in Mack, Colorado. They were to be trailed up over Baxter Pass. The herds were all thrown into big bunches to drive over the mountain. Mine, with Bodily's, were put in a band of about 8000. When we got near the top of the pass, a heavy snowstorm struck and we could only go about a mile and a half a day.

We got into Mack and got our sheep separated on the night of November 11, 1918. The word had just come in that the war was over. The railroad said that all who wanted to go to Grand Junction to the big celebration could go. Irvin Bodily was afraid to ride the train, so he stayed and all the rest of us went. When we got on the train, they told us that the only way to keep the flu away was to drink whiskey. I was the only one who did not drink, and about the only one who did not get the flu.

When I got home, I had a letter from Mother, who had taken Free to the University of Utah, that all the schools had been closed and that she and Free wanted to come home. I borrowed a small, light wagon from Brother Bodily and I had a nice young team. I hooked them up and went to Salt Lake to get them. I made good time on the trip. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November I was in Colorado, Vet in France, Clo in Arizona in the Red Cross on the Mexican border as a nurse, and mother and Free were in Salt Lake. On Christmas we were all home.

Leroy: Out there where they raise dry land grain. That's out north of Salt Lake, right straight west of Logan about thirty miles. Out in Blue Creek. That's where I went out and broke up those places. There's one company there. It was called the Big Field Company. They had 1000 acres of ground and had been there twenty maybe twenty-five years. On that farm they had five ox yokes, pretty near as big as this house. Where they first broke that, they did it with oxen. They had horses when I was out there. Since then, of course, it's gone to tractors. I plowed, I could only

make three rounds in the forenoon and three rounds in the afternoon it was such a big field. It was sod, breaking up that desert sod. Sometimes you'd go a half a mile before that sod would break. It looked like a big rope laying there.

MB: Did you like that country up around Logan?

Leroy: Well, yes. I like Logan. But I didn't like it out there. Of course, what makes you like a place is whether you can make a living on it or do anything with it. I had no chances there, but I did have roots here in this place. I've kept this place. In 1940 I went down to California, my boys were in the service, that was in WWII. I stayed down there for ten years. Lived down in Downy, California, just out from Los Angeles. There's where I raised my boys. They went to USC down there.

MB: What did you do for fun when you were a boy? Recreation?

Leroy: By golly, we had to make our own fun.

MB: What did you do?

Leroy: Now on this street up to the top and a mile down here, I had a heart attack and laid there on that bed for two weeks. In that time I counted up my old friends that were on this street. There were 109 young people that is between five and twenty-five in that mile street. That was in 1904 and 1905. 1905 was when the Reservation was thrown open. In 1906, all of these young people went over on that reservation and homesteaded, just moved out this whole darn country within two or three years. Right now there isn't twenty young people on this whole street, where there was 109 in 1904/1905.

We kids with big families would get together in the evenings. We had to work all the time. I worked; I ran this place all the time, so I didn't have very much time to play. We went to one another's places in the evening and played Run Sheep run, Pitch a Picket, and Old Sow. We had to make our own entertainment.

I was in the bishopric in 1929. In 1929, we built this church house over here and we put in a picture show machine. The ward community put it in. We charged a dollar a family for ticket. We had it once a week. People came clear from Naples. (Laughter) That was entertainment and that was in 1929-1930. But when I was younger and going to high school down here, I didn't have any recreation at all, you might say, as a kid. I had to work all the time.

MB: Did you ever get into any orneriness, play jokes on people or anything?

Leroy: Ha, Ha! Yeah, we always used to have great times. (Laughter) One time, there was an old fellow who lived up here in the next house on the other side of the street. He was from Virginia. He was a good gardener. He raised a beautiful garden. His neighbor right above him had his corral right by the fence. On Halloween we went up and took the bell off Gerber's cow and got down in Gerald's cornfield with this bell and rung it. The old man thought the cow was in there. He was chasing that cow. We'd ring the bell and then grab the clapper and go to the other side and ring it over here. Like to run that old man to death! That was the year they put the electric

light poles up the road here. They had them all strung along the road. Some of the boys, I didn't happen to be in on that, took their lariats on the saddle horns and drug those poles across the road on Halloween.

MB: Sounds like you had some good times back then.

Leroy: Oh, yes. We enjoyed ourselves because we was in groups. We had some big trees right here on this farm. They were planted n 1894-95. o they were up there forty feet high. We had a big swing and the kids used to gather here and swing in that. We had a rope that we had on our hay derrick for a swing. That swing was about thirty feet up to the pole. Here we had a lot of fun. Went to a lot of the church parties, and that's about the only thing.

MB: What do you remember about your school years? What was going to school like?

Leroy: The schoolhouse was right over here just two blocks north of the corner down here. Used to be a big wash running up through there. Dee Jenkins has filled that up now. But at noons and recesses in the winter time, we'd take scoop shovels or old pans or anything we could and coast down this hill. Played ball. We had to make our own fun. There was no television or anything.

I tell you the first phonograph that ever came into this country was one of those with the bell on it. It was in 1903 and the soldiers were over at Fort Duchesne then. My father set up a little meat market over there on the strip. McDonald, there were two fellows who built a saloon right by the line into Fort Duchesne. They wouldn't allow whiskey on the post, but they built just as close as they could. Anyway, they bought the first phonograph in the whole country.

One time my father ran short of beef, fresh beef, and he sold the Indians canned beef and told them it was canned cow. When they heard this phonograph over there, they went over and peeked in the door, couldn't see anything, just heard it coming out of this thing. They came back and father said, "What do you think of that?" "No savvy. Before you sell us canned cow, maybe sold canned man."

MB: How were relations with the Indians in those days?

Leroy: Well, we had good relations with them. My mother filed on... You know where the road goes down the steep dugway? Used to call it the ward dugway. There is a service station and café right on top on the hill. What do they call that?

MB: On the road to Roosevelt or the road to Lapoint?

Leroy: It's this side of Roosevelt five miles.

MB: The Chuck Wagon?

Leroy: The Chuck Wagon. My mother filed on a piece of ground up Monits Creek. You've seen that sign there, Monits Creek. Well, we were three-quarters of a mile north of Monits Creek. We lived there three years and proved up on this piece of ground. That was in 1907, '08 and '09. I was only fourteen, thirteen year's old. Lot of Indians stopped there. We broke up a piece of

ground, planted some oats, and worked there on the farm.

One day an old Indian, what was his name now? Anyway, he called at our place and had lunch with us. We had a picture of the Savior with the sheep, the Good Shepherd. The Indians were having a lot of trouble with the sheepmen getting over onto their grazing ground. They were just in an awful shape. This old Indian looked up at that picture as he was having his dinner. I said, "Do you know who that is?" "No savvy." I said, "That's Christ, do you like him?" "No, like." "What's the matter?" "He sheepman." Chief Wanroads that was his name. He used to call there quite often.

MB: How did the Great Depression affect your family? The Dust Bowl, the drought, those hard times?

Leroy: In 1918, Philly Stringham and I went out to Salt Lake, Heber, Provo and Ogden and bought purebred cattle for the county. I'd been to college and I belonged to the Farm Bureau. Rastus Petersen was the County Farm Agent. That was in 1918-20. We got those purebred cattle and brought them in here. We went all the way up into Idaho to get some purebred milking short horns.

[Mr. Carroll showing Mr. Brown awards he won while he was a young man.]

Leroy: That (those awards) were out of the purebred stock that Philly Stringham and I got. See that white one? That's a third place. The reason I got third is because I had three animals in that same class and I got all three.

MB: Looks like you took some sweepstakes awards.

Leroy: Yes, I got the sweepstakes. I had some of the best stock in the country. That's one of the things I've done. I was one of the first leaders in this county. 4-H Club.

MB: Did you help establish it?

Leroy: I helped establish it? I was the first club leader in here. There isn't hardly any of them alive. They're pretty near gone. This girl got grand champion and a trip to Chicago. I took four of my club members, three boys and this girl, we got five first places out at the state fair. Every one of those boys that I took got first place in his class. Then we got first place as a team.

MB: You did a lot of work in livestock then?

Leroy: That's what I was preparing for in college, to be a county agent. I took veterinary science. I took all they had there at the time. When I came home, I was the only doctor in veterinary science in the country for a long while. I majored in animal husbandry and agriculture.

MB: You were going to tell me some of those hard times in the '30's.

Leroy: That's why I showed you these papers. In 1930 I had eighteen head of milking cows, all

purebreds. I had the first all purebred herd in the county. There were a lot of purebreds besides mine, but I had the first all purebred herd. In 1933 the drought was so bad I couldn't feed my cows. I didn't have feed on the place for them. Noel was the county agent down there and he had rented Brush Creek. He had those farms rented over there and took my cows over on Brush Creek if he'd feed the cows. You can tell how severe it affected me. That fall was when FDR had all those alphabetical programs, AAA, WPA, NRA, and all those. Having been to school at the AC, all of these programs were directed out of the college. I was appointed one of the appraisers in that cattle killing program. We killed 10,080 head of cattle in Uintah County in the cattle killing program.

MB: What was the cattle killing program?

Leroy: Well, FDR put it up because of the drought and conditions and no feed. They were killing the cattle and getting them out of the country so there would be more feed for the rest. That was the cattle killing program. They'd kill cattle, sheep and pigs. I was just on the cattle killing program and I went clear to Whiterocks and out into the Book Cliffs mountains. We had a veterinarian from Logan for a while. Then he had to leave and they brought one in from Denver and I worked with him. There were three of us. Me, Will Oakes and Sim Ross, were appraisers. Then the veterinarian had to check them to see that there was no disease and would be harmful to people.

These people, for instance, a fellow over there at Lapoint, had a beautiful bunch of stuff and he didn't have a thing to feed them. They were bringing the cattle clear out from Hill Creek and Willow Creek out there, clear out to the further end of the country. They'd bring them here and ship them out to Salt Lake. Anything that was fat enough to kill at all, why, they'd save them and give the county the proceeds. But this man I was telling about, that has this nice herd, they sold all of his. Those that were too skinny to be worth feeding, they just shot hundreds of them, skinned them and just sold the hides.

Where there were good ones, they'd let one family have an animal to process. They bottled them, killed them and processed the meat. I picked out one of mine, purebred cow and killed her for beef. I had several calves. In fact, we gave \$5.00 a head for little calves and it went up to \$25.00 for the biggest. That was the highest price that could be paid.

There was some virtue to that cattle killing program. Over there at Lapoint these Greeks had a herd of cattle and they had big jaws, cancer eyes and all kinds of diseases. They killed them and paid them \$10.00 a head. They got rid of a lot of that stuff and also a lot of scrub bulls. Killed off a lot of scrub bulls and that was the virtuous part of the program. It was murder, that's all it was. We'd send word ahead about ten days before we'd go to a community, to get the chutes ready, because every animal had to be tagged. That's the way the government kept track of them. That was the veterinarian's part in it. He tagged this stuff.

When we went Whiterocks, over by Lapoint, we sent word to the Indians and those fellows that we were coming. When we got there, they didn't have any chutes made. We said, "What's the matter? What are you fellows doing?" We'd kill them. They had a whole bunch on saddle horses. They'd rope them strung out there on the ground faster than the vet could go to another and they had one ready for him all the time. That's quite a show. One fellow, one Indian, got his hand caught in the rope, had it on the horn, that pulled his hand right around there and just twisted two of his fingers off. He went over to the campfire and got a branding iron and burnt

and sealed his fingers where he cut them. We said, "What did you do that for?" "Me, savvy the doctor burn, me no savvy cut." He knew how the doctor would burn, but he didn't know how the doctor would cut.

MB: What did you think about Roosevelt's New Deal overall?

Leroy: Well, I guess maybe I was prejudiced, because I voted Republican all my life. When he died, I said, "That's the best thing Roosevelt ever did." After the cattle killing program, I was put into that AAA program, agriculture. There we were plowing up one third of the wheat, corn and cotton. One third of everything was to be plowed up because we had a surplus. That's the way FDR battled the surplus. Some old person said that if they'd plow up every third senator we'd make more money.

I had three counties, Duchesne, Uintah and Daggett, on this program. I was the head draftsman. We took a bicycle wheel, calibrated it, put handles on it and pushed that wheel with a string on it and counted the revolutions. That way we measured the ground, measured the wheat ground. They had a picture, they made this map, so many rows this way and all around it. They'd bring that into me and I'd figure up the acreage on the plot. I did that for several months. The government was doing that plowing up the wheat and grain, and yet they were giving it and it was so dry. Have you been in Ouray country?

MB: Yes.

Leroy: It was so dry down there that people moved down on the Green River. They couldn't raise a thing. They furnished them seed down there to plant along the river and pump the water out. They paid them to plow it up, up here and paid them to plant it down there. If that isn't the biggest jack-ass trick, I ever heard. Instead of giving them the wheat, they gave them the money. One guy they gave him a lot of seed, barley, and he made it into booze and sold it to the Indians.

MB: That's one way of turning it into profit.

Leroy: Yes, I've seen a lot of things happen in this country.

End tape #21

Begin Tape #22

Leroy:... The other side, anyhow, we was payin' ten cents a head, to have 'em, uh, trailed over there, because we couldn't ship 'em on the railroad up over that pass. So, then we threw 'em into bunches. I think there was eight thousand head in the bunch that mine were in. And Wallace Siddoway, that's...

MB: Ralph?

Leroy: Oh, yeah. His brother, his oldest brother, he was ahead of another big bunch, they had about ten thousand head in that one. And there was about four or five bunches like that. They

shipped out, about a hundred thousand head, out of (?) County, at that time. Trailered 'em up over the... When we got up on top of Baxter Pass, there was a big snowstorm came, and snowed us in, and we could only go about a mile and a half a day. Then Wallace Siddoway and Hatches, and some Stringhams, they had about forty or fifty head of big wethers. And they put the dogs into those wethers and shoved 'em in there and they'd break the trail, through that snow, and the herds would follow through. When they caught up with us, we were ahead of 'em, but we just pushed ours all off the side of the road, and let 'em go. Well, when we had got down into Mack, Colorado, over the other side, and got our sheep separated, we got 'em separated on the eleventh of November, that's the day that the war was over, and so many of the herders had died, and we were all wearing flu masks, everybody had to have a flu mask, and the railroad told us, when we'd got there and got our sheep separated out on the eleventh of November, they said, "Now if you fellows would want to go into Grand Junction, we'll haul you in free and bring you back. But, you've got to all have flu masks on."

Well, we got into Grand Junction, and all of the drinking places, all of the saloons, and cafes, and everything, the chairs were all piled on the tables, and they wouldn't allow three people to get together. They had to only allow a few men in there at a time, and they said, "Now, the only way to keep from gettin' the flu is to drink whiskey." And I was about the only one that didn't drink on that outfit, and I was about the only one that didn't get the flu!

MB: Maybe they got it from drinking whiskey!

Leroy: Yeah. But there, that's how bad that flu was. They was just dying like flies, everywhere.

MB: Did a lot of people die, right here in Vernal?

Leroy: Oh, boy. A lot of people died. And as I say, a lot of the sheepherders were found dead in their beds. Yeah. And the railroads. So many of 'em were sick and died that they couldn't run. They didn't have enough men—in fact, they had the president of the road bring the mail in, that's all they could bring, is just the one car to bring the mail in. They couldn't haul any cattle or sheep at all.

MB: You know, I had a gap in my tape, when one ran out, and you said you drove those sheep over with Robert Bodily?

Leroy: Yeah, Bodilys and, oh, there were about five or six others, that were together. There was Siddoway, he knew all of the big men because his dad, he had his four boys, the Siddoways. There was Wallace and John and Raymond and Ralph. That was the four Siddoway boys, and they each had a herd of sheep that their Dad had given 'em. And Bry Stringham, did you know him?

MB: I talked to him today.

Leroy: Well, Bry, his dad had sheep, and the Hatches, you know, from right up the road here, the Hatches were big sheep men, and the practice was that the father would let each boy run the sheep, and have the proceeds from that year, and then the next year another one would have it,

and that's the way they built up herds, and, oh, everybody, all those big men. You know, oh, what's his name,(?)s), was another big sheep man, and I think it was old John (?) and I believe it was Harold that sold his (?), do you know him? He's just a little younger than I am. I'm older than Harold. We're eighty-four. Bry Stringham, he's eighty-six, eighty-seven, and old Hatch, up here, he's eighty-six, and there's a few that's older than us. But have you met Alma Preece?

MB: No, he's on my list to talk to.

Leroy: Is he? Alma Preece, he's older than I am, he's about eighty-six. And have you got Simper? He's ninety-five.

MB: Mr. Simper?

Leroy: Albert Simper, he was bishop, and then, you're gettin' pretty much out of . . . Oh, Charley Hardy, he was a hundred years old last November. He was the oldest man in the county. But those Siddoways, Davises, Hatches, and all them put their sheep in together and had to drive 'em up over Baxter Pass. Have you heard of that pass, you know where it is?

MB: Uh, huh, I've heard of it. I haven't gone up there yet, but I'm going to.

Leroy: You can't go up. Well, you can go up; you see that's where they had the railroad to get the Gilsonite out of that country, that's what the railroad was built for. I've got a little piece of rail out here that I picked up when we were coming back over the pass from Mack, Colorado. There was a chunk of rail there about that long, and I picked it up and throwed it in the wagon, to bring it back and use for an anvil. I've still got it out there.

MB: You do? 'Cause they told me that they had tore up every bit of that. I've been told there's no more track or no more rail up there.

Leroy: Oh, no, everything's tore up. And I've got that piece of rail out here that I've been trying to keep as a souvenir.

MB: Yes, you might want to give it to a museum some day.

Leroy: I think I'll give it to the Daughters of the Pioneers, they have a museum down here.

MB: That would be great. I know they'd love that.

Leroy: I think I'll go see them one of these days. My wife used to go down there and work in that Daughters of the Pioneers Museum. That's my wife's picture up there.

MB: When did you marry?

Leroy: We married in 1919. And she, my wife, was Otella Markham from Spanish Fork. We were married in 1919. She died in 1975. I (?)

MB: I've heard that name but I haven't met him yet.

Leroy: Well, he's the same age as I am, no question. He used to know Huge Harold over here. And there's some stories out there.

MB: Well, I'll tell you, you have sure given me a lot of good information.

Leroy: Well, if you can separate it. It's been a bundle. Well, did you want this tape, or...

MB: Well, I'll tell you what I'll do...

Leroy: In 1917 my brother just younger than me, he went to Price, to work for a while, then he went down to Arizona. He was down there until... It was 1916, I guess. He got back here just when the draft was going. The United States had entered the war. Do you know what war that was?

MB: In 1917 we entered.

Leroy: Well, when he came back, the draft was here, and everyone had to report for the draft. And when he got home, like I said, I'd been down to the draft board and registered. And when he come home, why, he had to go. And I said, "Now listen, Whip, you've had a vacation, been all over the country, and I've stayed right here on this farm. I think it's only fair now for you to stay home and farm and let me go into the service." He said, "I'd rather go straight to France than to stay on this d-d farm." Then, they had a slogan down there at the draft headquarters, "Food will win the war!" So if anyone had a farm, why, they left the farmer on it. So I was deferred, as a farmer instead of being drafted into the service. I was deferred as a farmer.

MB: My granddad was too. He was a wheat farmer. And he didn't have to go.

Leroy: No. And, so that's the reason that he went down the next morning, and he went and volunteered in the Marines! He wouldn't stay on the farm. He volunteered, in the Marines. And it wasn't long until he was in France. And when he got over there, he was in the Marine Navigation. He was assigned as a motorcycle dispatcher, to take dispatches from headquarters, up to the front lines. Three times, he'd get his orders, and they'd give him a map and tell him where to go, and tell him how to get there, and he'd go as far as he could with his motorcycle, and then get down and crawl up to the trenches. The average life of a motorcycle dispatcher was five days. They killed 'em off just as... Well, three times, when he got back to his motorcycle, it was blown to pieces. He had to hitchhike it back to headquarters.

MB: He was lucky.

Leroy: Yeah. Well, he was. And on the night of the eleventh of November, he was in France. My sister, she was a Red Cross Nurse, and she was down on the Mexican border, as a nurse in the Army. And my other, my youngest brother, was out to the University of Utah, and I was in

Colorado, and there wasn't two of us in the same state. And on Christmas, we were all home. That's quite a marvelous thing.

MB: Was your sister down in Mexico, during that fracas? When they had all that trouble down there on the border?

Leroy: Yeah.

MB: With Pancho Villa, and -

Leroy: Oh, no, that was during the war, and that with Pancho Villa, that was later. No, but she was in the regular Army. As a Red Cross nurse. She was down on the border, my brother was in France, my other brother was in Salt Lake, and I was in Colorado.

MB: Yeah. You were at Mack.

Leroy: Yeah, I was in Mack, Colorado. So there wasn't two of us in the same state. But by Christmas time, he'd got back from France, and she was released from down in Mexico, and they closed all the universities. The BY and the U of U, and all of 'em were shut down. When I got back from shipping my sheep, I had a letter there from Mother, telling me to come to Salt Lake and get 'em and bring 'em home. So I had a young team. And I borrowed a light wagon, a two and three-quarters, light wagon, and I went to Salt Lake, made it in four days, about as fast as anybody traveled. And the thing that I remember most was that they had just put the water in our water system here, and I was one of the prime stock-holders over the water. There was a place right by the house, was the only water we had on the farm. And so when I went out to Salt Lake I bought the pipe, and brought it back in that wagon, so we could run the water from my house out to the corral.

MB: Uh-huh. It worked pretty good.

Leroy: Yeah. Well, this house, I went to the mountains, chopped the trees, and brought 'em into the sawmill, and paid for the sawing by carrying slabs and things away from the mill and got the material to build this house. And at the same time I got the logs and built me a big fifty-by-twenty barn. I had one of the best barns in the whole country.

MB: Did you build this house with your own hands?

Leroy: I didn't build it, didn't do the carpenter work, but I furnished all the materials. I dug that basement with a team and scraper.

MB: Oh, boy! That was work.

Leroy: Yeah, I was a month digging that out. And at the same time I was working on the mountain getting the materials. I had the material all on the ground—and this will show you another thing how in 1929 and '30, how tight labor was. One of the contractors contracted all

over the country. He was very well known. His mother came in here. (Campbell?) his name was, old (Campbell?). His mother came in from Colorado, and brought his family with him, and he started out over there, and just as quick as he could he came in here and he had a large family. And (?) came up here one day, brought him up here, and he saw I had this lumber all piled and ready, and logs ready to build, and he says, "If you let (Al Merrill was his name), he says, if you give him the contract to build this house, says he'll take anything you can produce for him." So, I says, "Well if he says wants it on a contract." And I said, "Well, what will you build it for?" Can you guess how much he bid on this house to build it?

MB: Well, I wouldn't know – five hundred dollars?

Leroy: Eight hundred. Eight hundred. And I paid him in beef and pork and eggs and butter and potatoes, and apples and everything. He just lived off of my farm. But he built this house. I had a little two-room house that my uncle built for me. A little two-room house. I was living right there in front of this house, nearly. And, that was in 1929. And if I hadn't built this... My wife used to call it the house that was built on faith. And if I hadn't built it then I don't know if... We wouldn't have got it at all, because things caved in in '30, and there was just nothing moving. But we got this house.

I had a coal furnace. I sent to Kalamazoo, Michigan. When I got my floor plans that I wanted, I sent the floor plans to the Kalamazoo Stove Company in Michigan, and they built the furnace that would fit this house. It cost me eighty-five dollars, delivered here. That furnace. Heh-heh. I had it put in and it furnished heat up until just three or four years ago; I had the gas put in.

MB: Oh, wow. Boy, you sure can't do it that way nowadays.

Leroy: No.

MB: You'd pay ten times that.

Leroy: Yeah. Oh, yes, the smallest kind of a furnace costs a thousand dollars now. But, I got it right when things were great. And this old guy put it in, when he built the house, he put the furnace in.

MB: Well, it looks like he was quite a carpenter.

Leroy: Oh, he was a good carpenter. He was a mechanic, all right, but, I wish we had time, I could take you down to this house. I'll show you something else, it's small. Here, I think you'd–

MB: Can I get something-- what do you need?

Leroy: Here, open this drawer, and yeah- that's it, right there. Now, that's a book that my father carried on his mission in 1893. In Ireland. Wrote that in pencil. Now, you can see this is his ledger that he had from the sawmill that he had up on that... See those entries?

MB: And those dates. You know, I bet the DUP would like to have that.

Leroy: Well, I wouldn't part with that. Because I wouldn't give – see that, [reads some names] that's those houses that's built around here; my father furnished the lumber for them. But here's the thing that's the most. See the price of the lumber, how much he got for it? Some of that is thirty cents for a bundle of lumber, right there. Today it'd cost you nearly ninety dollars.

MB: Oh, at least.

Leroy: Yeah. But, that was the prices that he got for his lumber. No, I wouldn't sell that; I wouldn't let anybody have it.

MB, reading: Will Carroll.

Leroy: That's my uncle. It was his – the one that he built. Now, when my father filed on this hundred and sixty, and he sold Will forty, and left forty, and left Joe, his other brother, a lot on the other part. You know DeVere Carroll?

MB: No, I haven't met him.

Leroy: Haven't met him. Well, have you met the chairman of Walker Bank?

MB: I haven't been down there.

Leroy: Well, that's DeVere's boy, he's a nephew of mine. Howard Carroll. He's the manager of the Walker Bank. And this is Joe Carroll. Joe worked for my father a lot. They worked together.

Now, imagine that writing in lead pencil – still legible. We have some pieces of information on Lee Sowards, he's dead now, you don't know him, but he was very prominent. In fact, he was a senator at one time out to our state legislature. His granddad was one of the first pioneers in this country, and he had a book like this. He had a store over there in Ashley Ward.

One day Lee Sowards called me up and he says, "Say, do you know who Carroll and Glines were?" And I says, "Yes, I sure do." "Well," he says, "I've got my grandfather's ledger here that he had in his store, and I find he's got some entries here of Carroll and Glines, and they run accounts in – can you tell me when that was done?" I says, "I want to get that information." He says, "That says 1886." That's when my father carried the mail across the mountains from Green River City, Utah, down to Green River and over here to Whiterocks."

MB: Boy, that is something.

Leroy: Yeah. And I was over that same road last week, with my son who lives right next door here. He has connections with a river-running outfit from Salt Lake. They go to the Traveler's Institute. They have three or four buses and trailers behind 'em, and they come here and pick him up in the morning. Two weeks ago, they took him down to Lodore. Do you know where Brown's Park is?

MB: Um-hum.

Leroy: You know where Lodore Canyon is, down by the lower...? That's where they went into the water to go down through Lodore Canyon, and then come out down there at Split Mountain.

MB: That's quite a river ride down through there.

Leroy: Yeah. Well, he hauls these people up there, see, but as he goes with 'em, just brings their cars back, and then he meets 'em at Split Mountain when they come through. Well, last Friday, when the last bunch went up there, they left one car up there at Lodore, so, he had to take his boy, Beau, down to Lodore to get that car. And I went with him. And that was just exactly the trip I wanted to make. We went up to Dutch John, down through...

MB: Little Hole, there, or Jones Hole?

Leroy: No. We went down, uh, through that basin where all the...

MB: Oh, Clay Basin?

Leroy: Yeah, through Clay Basin, and then after we went through Clay Basin we went through Brown's Park. We went down that little one, and the car had to have gas, the one to bring back. So, the boy brought the car that we went down after. He went back by Midvale, Colorado, and Leland brought me back to cross the swinging bridge. Have you seen that? Well, we went across the swinging bridge and up through Crouse Canyon and that's the trail my father took to bring the mail from Green River City.

MB: So, that's the old mail route.

Leroy: Yeah, the old mail route. You know where the Steinaker Reservoir is, up here? The next draw, the sawmill up there, have you seen that? That was called Mail Draw. And I think it's still called Mail Draw. That's where my father and them come down through with the mail, to Ashley, to the old post office. You seen that old post office over here in Ashley?

MB: Not yet.

Leroy: The first post office in the whole [Uintah Basin] country.

MB: Up there by Steinaker, that Mail Draw... That's where they came down into the valley?

Leroy: Yeah. Into the valley. That's where we came the other day. He brought me up through Crouse Canyon, across Diamond Mountain, and you have to go quite a ways up in order to hit that Mail Draw and still be coming down the way we do now. We come in right straight down this road.

MB: I bet that was quite an experience to go back over your dad's mail route.

Leroy: Yes, I was sure anxious. And here's the funny thing. Now, Glen Lambert has been a forester for fifteen or twenty years, and I asked Glen, "What is the name of the canyon that went down to the river, where they cross on the swinging bridge?" "I don't know," he said, "if it even has got a name." And I talked with a number of people and they couldn't tell me the name of that draw. But there was a stake and a sign right on the upper end of it: Crouse Canyon.

MB: Yeah. Well, I've been through Crouse,

Leroy: Have you seen that?

MB: Yeah, I know where Crouse is. That's an incredible canyon because that's so steep.

Leroy: Isn't that a beautiful canyon?

MB: The last time I was there with a friend, we were running the river. We drove halfway up the canyon, then we climbed up the wall about five hundred feet.

Leroy: Is that so?

MB: Yeah, well, I like to climb and walk, you know, and hike. We sat up there for about an hour and just enjoyed the canyon.

Leroy: That's one of the prettiest little canyons that I ever saw.

MB: That is, because it's so hidden and it's so steep.

Leroy: And unusual. It looks like it was laid down in the water, don't it? It's a layer of sand and then a layer of rock, and a layer of sand, just (?).

MB: Yeah. We climbed up into one amphitheater, you know, where it's round, like a theater, and you can stand in the middle and just talk normally, and just hear your voice everywhere.

Leroy: Is that so?

MB: It's just an incredible work of nature.

Leroy: Yes, it's a beautiful little canyon. That's the first time I ever was in it. Yessir, in Crouse Canyon. And even that ranger didn't know. I don't know how long since that sign was put up. It's been five or six years since he was in the service, it may have been put up since he was in the service, I don't know. But that's just exactly what I went for, was to get [to] that.

MB: Well that's great.

Leroy: Yep, I (?), well, Leland, he's out to the temple today, out at Salt Lake. He's going to get married.

[End of tape 22, side A; end of interview.]